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BRIDE OF DEIMOS
(Chapter 1)
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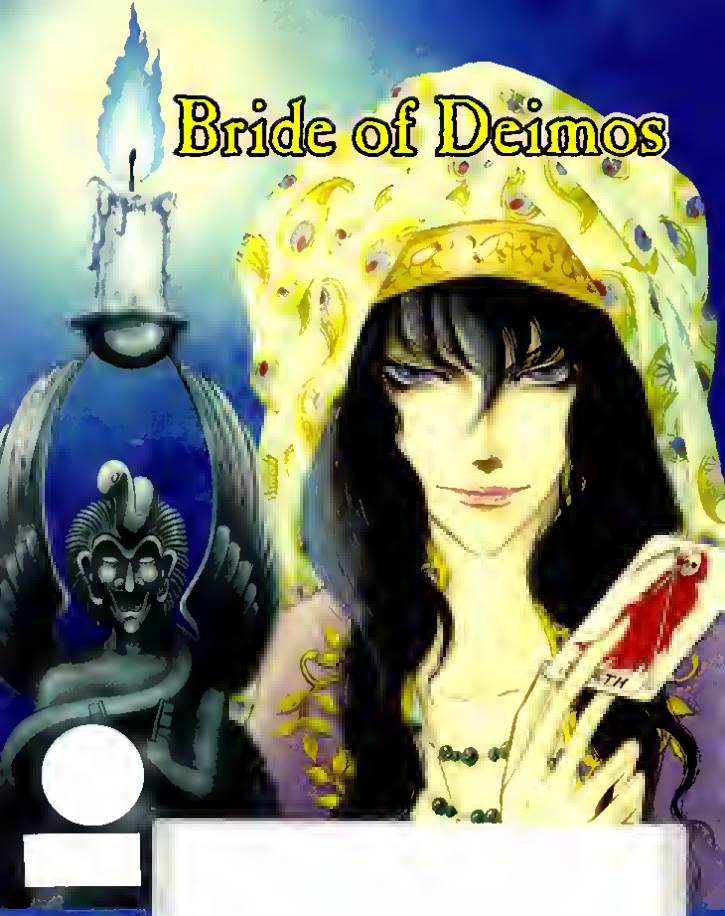
# Bride of Deimos



7

Story / Etsuko Ikeda

Aboard a Japanese cruise liner a seemingly lifeless manikin seeks revenge. Also Venus makes another devious move to reclaim her lost love

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# Bride of Deimos

VOL.7

Art: Yuho Ashibe
Story: Etsuko Ikeda

# BRIDE OF DEIMOS

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A PUPPET'S JOINT SUICIDE

SPLASH
SPLASH
WOW! SO THIS IS NARUTO'S EDDYING CURRENT.
AREN'T YOU GLAD WE CAME?

I'M JEALOUS, YOU'RE GETTING MARRIED AT SIXTEEN.
WELL, YOU CAME ALL THE WAY FROM TOKYO
YEAH, BUT I FEEL BAD.
TOMORROW'S YOUR WEDDING DAY, SHIZUKO AND YOU'RE HERE SHOWING ME AROUND
I MET HIM AND HE'S SO CHARMING.
AT FIRST I WAS UNEASY ABOUT THE IDEA OF AN ARRANGED MARRIAGE, BUT...
THE LUCKY MAN WHO'S MARRYING A YOUNG BEAUTIFUL GIRL!
YEAH, RIGHT!
IT'S JUST THAT WHEN HE'S NOT WORKING, HE CAN BE COLD AND A LITTLE BORING.
PLEASE! YOU CAN'T SEE HIS FACE.
HE'S JUST IN THE BACK.
I'D LOVE TO SEE HIM.
ISN'T HE PART OF AWAJI'S PUPPET BALLAD DRAMA TROOP, JYORUI?

HE WEARS A HOOD? THAT'S NO FUN!
WALKING TOWARDS DEATH.
PASSING LIFE, THE PASSING NIGHT.
ONE STEP AT A TIME, DISAPPEARING DOWN ADASHIGAHARA, WHITE WITH FROST.
SOMEONE'S RECITING A JYORURI!
IT'S THE "SONEZAKI JOINT SUICIDE."
A DREAM WITHIN A DREAM
SPLASH SPLASH SPLASH

THE BELL SOUNDS THE GOSPEL OF NIRVANA.
THE SONEZAWA JOINT SUICIDE IS PLAYWRITER CHIKAMATSUMON-ZAEMON'S MASTERPIECE.
THE SEVENTH ONE RINGS FOR THIS WORLD, THIS LIFE
THE BELL TOLLING, THE HOUR OF DAWN RINGS SIX TIMES
SHOP ASSISTANT TOKUBEI OF OSAKA'S LEADING SOY SAUCE STORE AND COURTESAN OHATSU FALL DEEPLY IN LOVE
HOWEVER, DREADFUL TALKS OF WEDDING EXPENSES DRIVE THEM TO MELONCHOLY AND THE TWO COMMIT A JOINT SUICIDE IN THE MOUNTAINS OF THE SONEZAKI GODS

ARE YOU CRYING, MINAKO?
I CAN'T BELIEVE THEY'RE WOODEN PUPPETS
I CAN FEEL THEIR SOUL...
MUSUMEGASHIRA
MAROME
BESSHI
THIS IS KADOME
THE NECK FITS RIGHT HERE.
THIS IS THE BODY OF A MALE PUPPET
THERE'S MORE
WOW!

BY PULLING THESE STRINGS ON THE NECK YOU CAN MOVE THE EYES AND MOUTH.
WATCH!
THAT'S AMAZING!
THIS STRING IS FOR THE FEET.
YOU TIE THIS STRING TO THE HANDS...
SEE? EVEN THE WRISTS BEND.
THE ARMS CAN BEND AT THE JOINTS.
THE LEGS MOVE USING THIS METAL ROD
WHAT ABOUT THE WOMEN'S LEGS?

CREEK
TAMAO!
THEY MAY LOOK REAL ON STAGE BUT IF YOU STRIP THEM NAKED, THEY LOOK PITIFUL.
THEY DON'T HAVE ANY
I'M ACTUALLY NOT QUALIFIED TO PLAY..
SUCH A BIG PART LIKE OHATSU'S, BUT...
YOU GUYS WERE WATCHING?
THIS IS MINAKO FROM TOKYO.
GOOD JOB!
THE SWEETNESS AND PASSION OF OHATSU'S LOVE TOUCHED MY HEART.
THE PERFORMANCE WAS REMARKABLE

WOW!
BUT WITH OHATSU, NONE OF THE OTHER PUPPETEERS CAN COMPETE WITH TAMAO'S PERFORMANCE.
I WAS DETERMINED TO RISK MY LIFE TO PLAY HER PART.
I PUT MY HEART AND SOUL INTO STUDYING HER HAIR ARRANGEMENTS AND DRESSING TECHNIQUES.
I FELL IN LOVE WITH OHATSU WHEN I APPRENTICED MYSELF TO THE MASTER.
IF OHATSU WERE HUMAN, I'D WANT TO MARRY HER.
YOU MUST FEEL SO MUCH LOVE FOR HER

THIS IS A GIFT TO US FROM THE MASTER.
OH YEAH!
HAHAHA!
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO SAY, "UNTIL I MET YOU."
YEAH! HE SAYS IT WON'T BE EASY MANAGING A HOUSEHOLD, SO HE WANTS US TO AT LEAST ENJOY A RELAXING HONEYMOON.
PLANE TICKETS?
TO HAWAII!?
NO WAY!

OUCH!
REALLY?
IN AWAJI ALL THE JYORUI ACTORS AND SHAMISEN PLAYERS ARE FARMERS OR RUN FAMILY BUSINESSES.
I'M GONNA BE A GOOD WIFE AND CARE FOR THESE PUPPETS.
THE PUPPET... BIT ME!

DON'T BE SILLY. YOU PROBABLY JUST HURT YOURSELF ON THE LIP-NEEDLE.
HE,H
BY HOOKING A TOWEL ON THIS NEEDLE AND SHAKING HER HEAD YOU CAN COMPRESS HER LIPS AND MAKE IT LOOK LIKE SHE'S CRYING
LOOK AT HER MOUTH
LIP-NEEDLE?
COME ON NOW.
HOW ARE YOU GONNA CARE FOR THE PUPPETS LIKE THIS?

DONE! AFTER OUR WEDDING TOMORROW, WE'RE OFF TO HAWAII!
CLICK
SLIDE
I'M SO GLAD OURS ISN'T A SUICIDE TRIP OF LOVERS LIKE OHATSU'S.
OURS IS A LOVE TRIP
YEAH
HM ?
WHAT'S WRONG?

I CAN'T FIND THE TICKETS.
[illegible]E PROBABLY IN THE COSTUME ROOM. I'LL GO LOOK.
OUCH!
W-H-M
THAT'S STRANGE. WHERE DID I DROP THEM?

AGGHHHH
I HAVE WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR.
YES. I'M OHATSU THE PUPPET.
YOU'RE..!?

NO!
GIVE IT BACK!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING!?
THERE WILL BE NO HONEYMOON FOR YOU TWO!
RIP
YOU'RE A YOUNG PRODIGY PUPPETEER.
WHO DO YOU THINK YOU OWE YOUR POPULARITY AND SUCCESS TO?

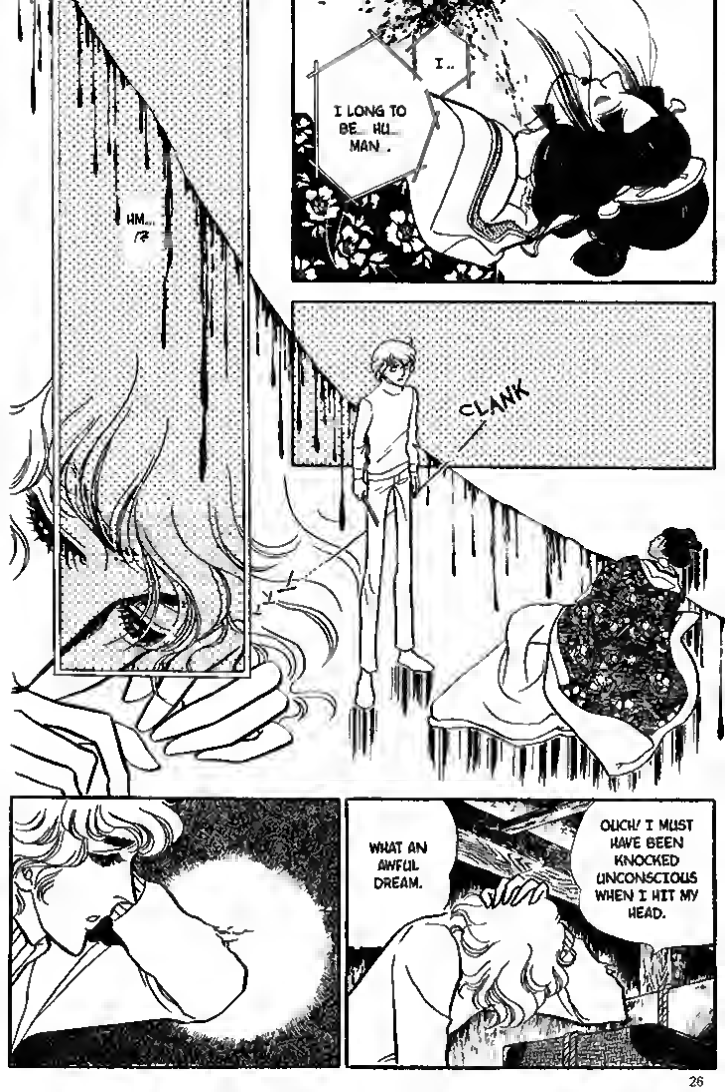
THAT'S HOW WE CAPTURED THE AUDI-ENCE'S HEARTS!
MY LOVE FOR YOU HAS BEEN RESIDING IN OHATSU'S HEART.
DON'T THINK IT'S YOUR SKILL.
WHAT!
"YOU'D MARRY ME IF I WERE HUMAN..." THOSE WERE ALL LIES?
SO EVERYTHING YOU SAID, "OHATSU IS SWEET. OHATSU IS BEAUTIFUL..."
HOW CAN A PUPPET FALL IN LOVE WITH ME ?
YOU... YOU'RE A PUPPET..

ALL GREAT PUPPETEERS FALL IN LOVE WITH THEIR PUPPETS!
TELL ME HONESTLY!
THAT YOU'VE REALLY FALLEN IN LOVE WITH A HUMAN
SO YOU'LL JUST TOSS ME ASIDE LIKE SOME TOY YOU'VE GROWN WEARY OF?!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?! YOU'RE ONLY A PUPPET!
AAAHHH... PUPPET...
PUPPET..
PUPPET!
THAT SADDENS ME...
IF ONLY I WERE HUMAN, YOU'D BE MINE, ONLY MINE...

EVEN PUPPETS HAVE THEIR SENSE OF HONOR
YIKES
YOU'RE NO LONGER MY PUPPET!
WAIT!
HALT
IF I CAN'T HAVE YOU..
..I'D RATHER DO WHAT WE'VE PRACTICED ON STAGE.. COMMIT JOINT SUICIDE!
O.. OHATSU..

STOP!
...WITH YOU!
SLASH
STOP! OHATSU!
I'LL KILL YOU...
OHATSU

I SAID STOP!
SNATCH
OH NO! HER NECK!

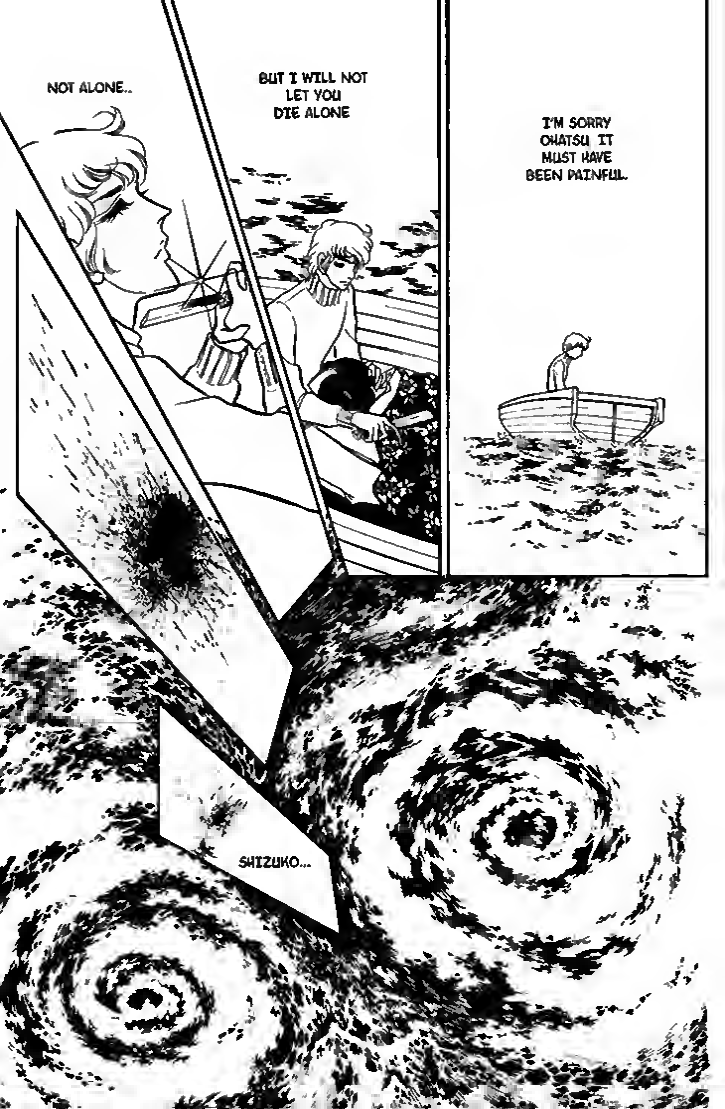

I..
I LONG TO BE... HU... MAN.
HM...
CLANK
WHAT AN AWFUL DREAM.
OUCH! I MUST HAVE BEEN KNOCKED UNCONSCIOUS WHEN I HIT MY HEAD.

MY SLEEVE ...!?
YIKES!
OH - OHATSU!
"I LONG TO BE HUMAN."

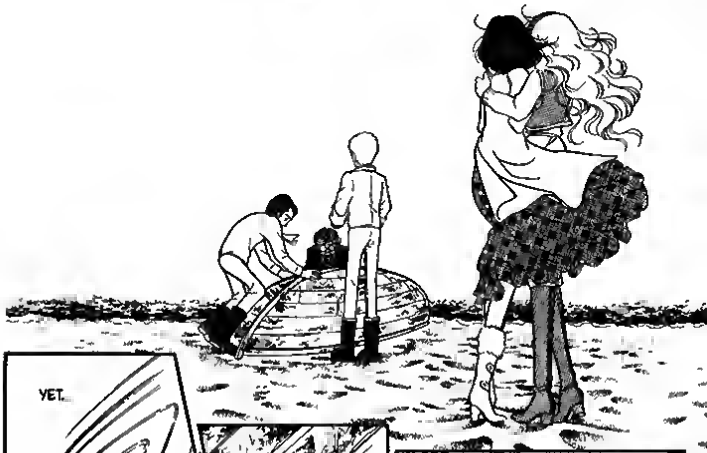
COMMITTED MURDER!
AND I...
I.
YOU DID BECOME HUMAN...
TAMAO!
TAMAO! WAIT! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

NO, THAT'S A PUPPET. IT'S OHATSU
MINAKO...
BUT SHE LOOKS SO HEAVY... LIKE A HUMAN...
I KILLED HER! I CAN'T MARRY YOU!
SHIZUKO! DON'T COME NEAR ME!
SPLASH

TAMAO! NO! STOP!
DRAG
COME BACK! IT'S ONLY A PUPPET!
TAMAO!


NOT ALONE..
BUT I WILL NOT LET YOU DIE ALONE
I'M SORRY OHATSU IT MUST HAVE BEEN PAINFUL.
SHIZUKO...

A MONTH LATER, TAMAO'S BOAT WAS WASHED ASHORE.



YET...
FLIP
READY? LET'S FLIP IT OVER

GGHH
AHH
OH. MY.
TAMAO'S BODY WAS LOST IN THE WATER

A PUPPET BECOMES HUMAN... HOW CAN THAT BE?
A WHITE BUTTERFLY FLUTTERS BY EVEN ON A COLD WINTER DAY...
BUT I SAW IT WITH MY OWN EYES
CAN LOVE'S PASSION BREAK THROUGH REASON?
A WOMAN'S LOVE FOR HER HUSBAND.

SOARING IN THIS DIRECTION AND THAT DIRECTION.
BLOWN BY THE WIND, FLAPPING THE SLEEVES OF ITS WINGS.
THE DYED PATTERNS APPEAR AS FLOWERS.
LANDING ON THE SHOULDER, IT SPEAKS FOR ITSELF. A SWALLOWTAIL ON A DESIGNED FLOWER.
WHAT AN UNUSUAL PLOT, VENUS.
HMHM I WAS ONLY IMITATING YOU, RECITING MY VERSION OF THE SONEZAKI JOINT SUICIDE

I SHALL TOO...
JUST A PUPPET, YET SHE SEIZED A MAN'S HEART WITH A WOMAN'S DETERMINATION
THAT OHATSU!
DEIMOS! I'M NOT GOING TO LOSE YOU TO MINAKO!

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